

Quick Guide

December 2021

How to make a short video



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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A quick guide for parliamentary staff on how to start making short videos, using a phone and with limited resources

With more virtual events and meetings, and fewer opportunities to present what you do in person at seminars and conferences, it is useful to be able to create short videos about the work of your parliament. Not all parliaments have the resources to film and produce high-end material, but most of us have access to a smartphone and some simple editing software. This is enough to make short videos to share with others.

Planning

While you do not need a detailed script, you do need to plan what you are going to do and say, and to understand how much time is available (or needed). Sketch out a quick timeline or structure with the key points that you need to get across.

If you are not confident improvising around this structure, you might want to write a script. The challenge here is that we speak less formally than we write, so bear this in mind.

Equipment

You will need:

- A smartphone
- An external microphone
- A tripod (or something to support the smartphone camera)
- Online storage space (video files can be large)
- A quiet space to record in

All you really need is a way to record the video, and most modern smartphones will be more than good enough for this. The picture quality is fine but the sound can be disappointing (particularly if you are outdoors). You can improve the quality a lot by

investing in a clip-on (lavalier) microphone. Get one with a long lead and a muff to reduce 'popping' from your voice and wind noise.

You need a way to stand the smartphone in a stable position, with the camera perfectly vertical and on its side (landscape). Never shoot these sorts of videos in portrait mode.

The camera should be positioned at head height, just over a metre away from you. You can do this with a table and a pile of books, but the best way is a tripod with a smartphone attachment.

Filming

You need to be comfortable, sitting up straight and naturally. Consider what is behind you. This can be a blank wall, bookcases or something that is not too distracting (so preferably not moving). You are looking for a backdrop that adds to the message and re-enforces your role or what you are saying.

Set the camera so that you are in the centre and all of your face and shoulders are displayed. Use the front-facing camera (assuming the quality is good enough) so that you can see whether everything is lined up. You should be looking straight at the camera. Note but do not worry that the camera lens itself is off to one side.

Do a test recording to ensure that the microphone is working, there is no distracting background noise, and the picture is straight and how you would like it.

If you have a script or a structure that you need as a reminder, you can tape a piece of paper below the camera. Next, place a tablet or a laptop as close as possible below the camera so that you do not have to look too far away to read it. There are several free teleprompters or autocue apps and websites available. Practice with them, as they do not always feel natural at first.

When you are filming, leave lots of space in the recording so that you can edit parts out. Start the camera recording (or ask someone else to do this), then sit back and count to five. After each discrete section, it helps to leave a long pause (5–6 seconds or more) before going on to the next part. This gives you a chance to make a mistake and retake. When you make a mistake, pause, count to six and start again. Do not stop and restart the camera; you can edit out all redundant parts afterwards.

Most of us warm up as we talk, and it is the same for recording a video on your own. It is not natural for most of us, so it can feel a bit awkward at first. To tackle this, you can do some practice recordings. Alternatively, if you are more confident, start somewhere in the middle, and record the opening sequence last, when you have warmed up.

Editing

The key to making the video work is as much to do with editing as filming. You might be able to edit with the software available on your phone or an app that you can download. Alternatively, transfer the video to your computer and edit it there. If you are using a Mac, iMovie has all the tools you need. If you are using Windows or

Android, do a bit of research on video editing tools for beginners; you do not need much!

Editing involves cutting and pasting the segments you have recorded into the right order. Leave each *intro* and *outro* (where you paused) until everything is in the right place and then remove them too. However, leave some space to make the recording sound natural and flow well. The next (optional) step is to add captions and titles. To do this, follow the instructions but go for a minimalist approach. Less really is more, as it is the content that matters, not the fancy effects.

Once you are happy with the result, package it up as a file or share it to YouTube, Vimeo or similar.

Find out more

- [How to film professional videos with an iPhone](#)
- [Filming with an iPhone: the complete guide to shooting video like a PRO!](#)
- [Seven tips for filming professional videos on a mobile phone](#)
- [Beginner's guide to making video with your smartphone](#)
- [Five tips for filming with a mobile phone](#)

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Online meetings

Getting the most out of videoconferencing tools and online meetings for MPs and parliamentary staff – set-up and good practice

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the use of videoconferencing tools in parliaments. Whether for a virtual plenary or MPs' committee meetings, a meeting with constituents or meetings for staff, there are a few things that you can do to make online meetings safer and more effective. This Quick Guide will help members and staff work more safely and effectively during online meetings.

Space

Find somewhere private, where you will not be disturbed and background noise is minimal.

Remember to close doors and windows, and turn off TVs, music and anything with ambient noise (such as fans or heaters). Check that your mobile devices are on silent and that pets will not make an untimely intervention.

If you are likely to be disturbed, put a sign outside your door to indicate you are in a meeting.

Device

A computer is better than a mobile phone for videoconferencing. If your computer is wired directly to your router, the quality is likely to be better and the reliability higher. Direct wiring might not be necessary if you have a strong and reliable wi-fi signal.

If you do need to use a mobile device, use a tripod or something similar to hold it stable. Make sure it is on its side (landscape mode). In some areas, a 4G or 5G mobile connection may be more reliable than a fixed internet connection.

Make sure you understand the software that your parliament needs you to have to take part in meetings. All the software you need should be up to date, including web browsers and security applications.

Software

Make sure that you have the latest version of the virtual meeting software installed, and that all the tools you need are fully up to date (ideally, ensure that automatic updating is turned on).

Camera

This creates the image of you that others will see. Make sure that the camera is at about eye level, and that you are front and centre of the picture. You can raise or lower the camera or computer to achieve this if necessary.

Do not get too close to or too far from the camera. Try to keep the picture so that it shows your full face and the top of your shoulders (imagine you are sitting for a passport photograph!).

When you speak, look straight at the camera. Depending on parliamentary procedure, you may need to keep the camera on to verify your attendance in a session.

When you are listening to others, your camera is still streaming. Others may be able to see you unless you turn your camera off, so be aware of this at all times.

Sound

It is important that you can be heard clearly. As a computer's internal microphone often picks up other noises around you, you are recommended to use an external headset microphone for improved clarity. Headsets also allow you to listen to other participants in private.

Always keep your microphone muted when you are not speaking.

Light

Try to create the best lighting for your online meeting by avoiding bright light sources behind you or directly overhead. If you can, position the strongest lights in front of you or place your computer directly in front of a window. You can then adjust the lighting by moving the lights or drawing the blinds.

Background

It is not just you on camera. Others can see what is behind you too. Try to keep this space clear, neutral and professionally appropriate. Remove personal items and make sure no confidential information is visible. If you are going to use the screen-sharing option, also ensure that applications and documents on your desktop are closed. Pay particular attention to anything that is confidential or might be a potential security or privacy risk.

Etiquette

If you are taking part in a committee or plenary via videoconferencing, assume that the rules for these meetings apply. Think about dress, use of language and tone in your interventions. Avoid eating snacks or doing anything on camera that would not be acceptable in a face-to-face meeting.

To speak, follow the accepted protocol for your parliament. When it is your turn, unmute your microphone and wait until your camera image is in the main window, or until it has been indicated to you that you have the floor. Mute the microphone when you have finished.

Security

As a matter of good practice, never share links to closed meetings on social media, and be careful not to post screenshots of your computer with confidential information visible (including meeting IDs). Even if a meeting is to be broadcast, remember that the public broadcast link will be different to the link for participants.

Find out more

- [The ultimate guide to digital meetings](#) from Slack
- [Zoom video tutorials](#)

Acknowledgements

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Developing a virtual meeting policy



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Developing a policy for parliament's virtual and remote meetings

This guide has been developed to help parliaments create practical policies and guidelines for holding online meetings. The policies in this guide are, of course, advisory and should be modified to support your own needs. When developing your own policy, consider existing rules and procedures, and ensure that what you develop matches your parliament's security requirements.

Roles and responsibilities

It can be helpful to ensure that the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in online meetings are clearly defined. Roles can include:

- **Convenor:** Responsible for organizing the meeting, and ensuring that all invitations (and links) are issued in a timely manner and that documentation required for the meeting is distributed and made available to participants.
- **Chair:** Responsible for the timely running of the meeting, for managing the agenda, and ensuring that participants have been informed about recording and minuting.
- **Secretary:** Responsible for administration within the meeting, and for minutes/recording.
- **Technical support:** Responsible for assisting participants with technical issues during the meeting, making recordings and ensuring meeting security protocols are adhered to.
- **Participant:** Any person invited to participate in the meeting.
- **Guest:** Someone who is not part of the full meeting but has been invited to listen or to participate in a portion of the meeting.

Organization of the meeting

Remote or virtual meetings will normally follow the same procedures and protocol as for face-to-face meetings, and their outcomes will have the same standing, providing that all the policies have been adhered to. This means that:

- Each participant will be given sufficient notice ahead of a meeting and should receive a copy of the agenda and documents for consideration. Shorter notice periods can apply to urgent matters.
- The Chair will be appointed from the members of parliament in attendance (unless agreed in advance or as directed by existing parliamentary procedure).
- The meeting will be chaired in the same way as any other meeting. If the Chair is unavailable, normal procedures will be followed so that their duties are fulfilled in their absence.
- Any existing conflict of interest pertaining to the agenda will be declared at the start of the meeting. If a conflict of interest prevents an attendee from participating in any part of the meeting, the Chair will ensure the attendee ceases participation until that business is concluded.
- Minutes of any meetings will be taken in line with normal procedures and agreed by all attendees at the next meeting.

Participation

Members of the virtual meeting will:

- Act at all times in accordance with the policy for virtual meetings.
- Act in accordance with any code of conduct agreed within the parliament.
- Not take covert recordings or screenshots of meetings.
- Notify the chair of any objections they have to the meeting being held virtually.
- Notify the chair of any objections they have to the recording of the meeting.
- Be respectful of the rights of individuals who do not wish to be recorded.

If a vote takes place, remote attendees will be entitled to participate in the vote as usual. In an open vote, remote attendees will be asked directly what their votes are. In a closed vote, the Chair will ensure the remote attendees are asked to vote confidentially. For example, the conference video and speakers could be turned off while the remote attendees cast their votes to the Chair.

Confidentiality

While all the normal rules about the confidentiality of meetings are to be adhered to, there are some additional considerations for virtual meetings:

- Attendees must ensure all voice-controlled devices are switched off during the meeting (for example Alexa, Google Assistant).
- The meeting must not be recorded unless this is made clear and approved by all members of the meeting in advance.
- Any devices used to record a meeting, whether they belong to parliament or are personally owned, must adhere to the parliament's device policy.
- The creation, storage, retention and disposal of documents and recordings pertaining to the meeting must be in line with the provisions of current data protection and privacy laws (as well as any parliamentary policies).
- Where a confidential item is on the agenda, attendees will be informed of this and the recording can be paused. Confidential items will only be included in the recording of a meeting if the purpose and intention of the recording is clear and justifiable.

Virtual meeting host

When hosting a virtual meeting, it should be considered good practice to:

- **Require a password:** To protect the privacy and security of your meeting, and to control who can join.
- **Review attendees:** To ensure that only those who are entitled to attend are permitted entry.
- **Inform if recording:** As discussed, ensure that everyone clearly understands that the meeting will be recorded.
- **Explain interpretation options:** If the meeting has interpretation facilities, ensure they are explained at the start of the meeting.
- **Explain voting options:** Ensure that all attendees know how voting will work (if required) and consider testing this before it is needed.

Sharing your screen: If you will be sharing your computer screen, be sure to first close all other applications and remove any sensitive files from your computer's desktop. Also disable any pop-up notifications. This helps ensure you do not accidentally share sensitive or embarrassing information while sharing your screen. Another option is to consider sharing just the program you want to show instead of your entire computer screen.

Find out more

We suggest that you use this guide in conjunction with our **CIP Quick Guide to online meetings**.

Acknowledgements

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Implementing the hybrid plenary

Putting the building blocks in place for holding virtual and remote plenaries

This guide has been developed to help parliaments plan and develop implementation roadmaps for **remote plenary meetings** and **voting solutions** to support the hybrid parliament. A hybrid parliament is one where some MPs (and staff) meet face-to-face in the chamber and others take part remotely via digital methods.

Introducing this level of technological innovation in the traditional sphere of the plenary can be a very visible exercise; getting it right from the start is crucial. Due to the mix of institutional, procedural and technical issues, the process requires a concerted effort and joint work with many different stakeholders across parliament, including the parliamentary leadership, MPs, clerks, relevant information offices and ICT. Developing a clear implementation roadmap increases the likelihood of success.

Key building blocks of the roadmap

The following roadmap presents building blocks based on the early lessons learned from parliaments as they established hybrid plenary environments. These elements are not prescriptive but tend to be more typical. They have been consistently observed and can inspire you to develop your own hybrid plenary implementation roadmap.

1. Leadership engagement and endorsement: Senior-level commitment is required for a parliament to initiate a hybrid plenary project. It is important to educate and inform key stakeholders, including the Speaker and the Clerk (e.g. for parliamentary services), so that they can understand the benefits and explore the concept. Ideally this leads to endorsement of the project.

2. Establishing a technical working group: Key decision makers for an eChamber solution, including the Speaker, parliamentary services Clerk, and other officials (such as the Table section, ICT department etc.) must come together in a designated working group. They should consider in more detail how an eChamber solution will work in the parliamentary context and within plenary proceedings, as well as how it can be provided as a service, technically managed by the ICT department, and owned by the office of the parliamentary services Clerk. The working group will need to develop the roadmap and own it as the project proceeds. The group should take stock of key issues along the way and facilitate effective decision-making. Some of the issues on the roadmap may include the following.

3. Review of existing rules: Introducing a hybrid solution to manage plenary proceedings will challenge the existing standing orders and rules of procedure. Other parliaments have faced the same problem and found ways around it by adapting the rules or setting requirements for the technology, whether temporary or permanent.

4. eChamber app: The parliament's ICT department must be given a mandate to lead this project in terms of establishing the scope and viability of available eChamber solutions (e.g. from the market or other parliaments). It is important to assess the functional and technical requirements to ensure they are in line with the parliament's own requirements for its plenary processes. In coordination with the Clerk of parliamentary proceedings, advice should be given on how the app should change (or a recommendation made for a new app).

5. End-user devices and connectivity: MPs and senior staff will need to be able to access an eChamber app from mobile devices, either inside the parliamentary premises (using local connectivity) or remotely (using data plans provided). At the recommendation of the ICT department (and in line with good practices observed in other parliaments) the parliament will need to establish a model for providing devices and connectivity. This will involve the parliament either procuring and issuing devices through a service that it provides and manages in its entirety, or running a Bring Your Own Device model. Decisions made here must be fully cognizant of security and confidentiality arrangements, and must ensure that the eChamber app does not compromise the integrity of the parliament. It is important to consider users' trust in the apps being deployed, and how to increase trust through the early involvement of MPs in the design process.

6. Operational planning: The ICT department will need to conduct operational planning for the introduction of an eChamber app, including establishing standard operating procedures for how the devices should be procured, managed, registered, activated and used. Relevant IT security policies and guidelines need to be developed.

7. End-user awareness and support: Together with support from the leadership, the ICT department must provide MPs and senior staff with induction training on how to use the eChamber app, and how to comply with relevant IT security and acceptable use policies and guidelines, including online meeting etiquette. End users must also know how to request and receive support from the ICT department.

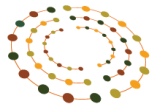
8. Evaluation and evolution: Consider how use of the app will be monitored to ensure that it is working effectively and efficiently. Establish a process for managing the development and deployment of new functionality. Capturing these lessons is important for the wider parliamentary community, and we hope that you will share what you learn.

Find out more

We suggest that you use this guide in conjunction with our **CIP Quick Guides to online meetings** and **developing a virtual meeting policy**.

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IT governance



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Envisioning a digital strategy to support the new normal of a digitally transformed, user-focused, transparent and data-oriented parliament

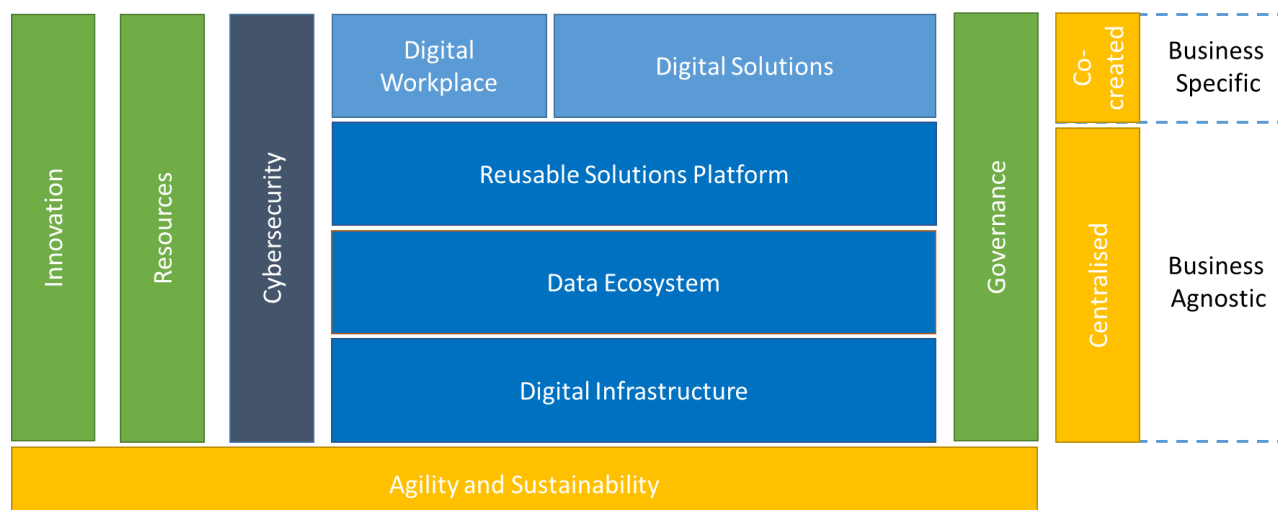
Digital tools and infrastructure lie at the heart of the modern parliament. It is no longer appropriate to think of ICT in isolation. Rather, it must be approached holistically, taking in the entirety of a parliament, and understanding how ICT affects and transforms processes and culture.

By using contemporary digital tools, this new vision aims to address several considerations for a digital parliament, ranging from internal functions to citizen engagement. A user-centred approach aims to create new products that provide meaningful and relevant experiences to citizens. Being data-oriented means reusing data on all parliamentary platforms. Where this data is external, it should be provided once and reused in several places through an open data approach. This enables civil society to make direct use of parliamentary data to support their objectives of reinforcing the transparency of legislative activities. Compliance with this approach is necessary if a parliament is to be open. This vision seeks to develop a digital parliament far beyond its walls, reaching out to where citizens are.

To realize this vision however, members of parliament must first be supported effectively. Providing digital solutions to support them in all aspects of their work is a requirement. This includes ensuring that they have effective access and tools, not only for their legislative tasks, but also when working in their constituencies and anywhere else that their legislative activities might bring them to. It means addressing how parliament can work in a mobile and flexible environment, incorporating a wide variety of devices and trusted solutions, and following the latest security and data-privacy recommendations.

Digital strategy

A parliament's digital strategy is expressed through the vision of a digitally transformed, user-focused and data-oriented legislature, as the diagram below demonstrates.



The three axes of governance, innovation and resources must be developed while also considering strengthened security. To deliver tools that empower MPs in a timely way during their parliamentary activities, a digital delivery model is required that has agility and sustainability at its heart. Crucially, enabling actions – on governance, resources and innovation – are necessary to develop the appropriate conditions for the transformations expected.

IT maturity assessment tool (IMAT)

IMAT supports parliaments wanting to develop a modern digital strategy. It is a simple exercise that enables parliaments to assess their maturity level against the main organizational enablers of a digital transformation in public organizations. IMAT stems from the benchmarking activities of the European Parliament’s Directorate General for Innovation and Technological Support. The tool is designed to measure the Parliament’s performance and promote a culture of continuous improvement internally. It relies on the Total Quality Management approach for organizations, and the consolidated project management culture of the European Parliament. However, it can be easily implemented in any IT division in a public administration. The main goal of IMAT is to provide a quick overview of the current maturity level of IT enablers, and of what level could be achieved in the medium term (3–5 years). IMAT maturity levels are a simplified version of the levels used in the Capability Maturity Model Integration process. The digital strategies developed with IMAT take account of each public organization’s specificity.

IMAT in practice

CIP’s IT Governance Hub, hosted by the European Parliament, offers parliaments a workshop on using IMAT. During the workshop, you will learn:

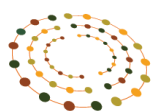
- how to prepare for an IMAT,
- how long an IMAT usually takes,
- who should own/conduct an IMAT (e.g. IT steering committee, modernization committee, digital committee),
- how to link IMAT results back to other governance policies and documents (IT and organizational),
- how to monitor IMAT progress.

Find out more

CIP's IT Governance Hub offers an overview of how to address this transformation. It can support parliaments wanting to understand their own digital maturity and roadmap more fully. Visit the [IT Governance Hub](#) for more information and to connect with hub members.

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